



Bear Cottage Children's Hospice

Where life  
is for living



Information  
for families



## Booking your child's respite visit

- 🐾 Bookings will be made dependent on bed availability and individual circumstances.
- 🐾 Bookings can be made by phoning the Nursing Unit Manager on **(02) 9976 8301**.
- 🐾 Our Administrative Officer will send relevant paperwork to you three weeks prior to your admission. This will give you time to see your doctor and complete paperwork e.g. medical update form, medication charts, consents, etc. Unfortunately we will not be able to admit a child if the paperwork has not been completed. For legal reasons, we are not able to administer medications without relevant forms signed by a medical officer.
- 🐾 On admission day, the nurse admitting your child will need to confirm with parents/guardians that the consents, care plan and medication charts are correct and up to date. Please allow at least one hour for the admission process.
- 🐾 Families may only book seven days of respite every second school holidays, however, this is also dependent on bed availability.

**Occasionally your child's respite visit may have to be rescheduled in the event a bed is required for end-of-life care or an emergency admission. This need is unpredictable, and we will do our utmost to prevent any inconvenience. You will be notified as soon as possible so that alternate arrangements may be made. We will do everything possible to avoid any disruption to pre-arranged plans.**

**"There is no housework to worry about or meals to prepare – freeing us up to focus on our son."**



## When families come to stay at the house

Bear Cottage endeavours to accommodate the whole family during their child's stay.

This may either be in one of our family units downstairs or on the upper level in motel-like rooms.

All accommodation is assigned on a needs basis and according to bed availability. This is at no cost to the families.

- 🐾 Don't forget to bring your personal belongings and toiletries.
- 🐾 Bed linen and towels are provided.

### Parking

Two-hour parking is available in the street adjacent to Bear Cottage. There is limited parking available in the car park under the building, however, this is for staff and resident families only. Only one car per family can be accommodated.

Please ring the buzzer at the top of the driveway for access to the car park.

Please ask your visitors to park in the street.







## Communicable Diseases

For the safety of all children staying at Bear Cottage you must inform us if your child or any family member has been exposed to any of the following within three weeks of admission:

-  Chicken Pox
-  Measles
-  Tuberculosis
-  Whooping Cough
-  Mumps

If your child is experiencing any elevation in body temperature, vomiting or diarrhoea, please inform the staff prior to your child's admission. Due to the fragile health of the children at Bear Cottage, it may be necessary to reschedule a respite visit. If your child develops any of the above signs or symptoms while at Bear Cottage, your child's remaining stay may be cancelled and rescheduled for another time.

Head lice can be a problem and we reserve the right to check your child's hair and treat if we see fit.




# What to bring for your child's stay at Bear Cottage

On your first visit to Bear Cottage we request that you help us settle your child into their new environment and assist us in getting to know their special needs.


We rely on you as the family to provide everything your child requires at home on a daily basis, such as medications, equipment and supplies.


## Things to bring for each admission include:

-  **Medications** – Please bring an adequate supply of medication for the duration of your visit. Medications need to be properly labelled and in their original container (including name and concentration of drug). Liquid medications must be in a pharmacy bottle or nurses will not be able to administer.

**The medication chart must be completed and signed by your doctor.**

If extra medications are required they will be obtained from our local pharmacy and charged to you. Bring along your Healthcare, Safety Net and Medicare details so that the correct amount can be charged.


-  **Special Dietary Products/Supplies** – If your child is on tube feeds, please bring a sufficient supply of formula and the feeding pump and feed bags (if required).


-  **Equipment and supplies** – Wheelchair, charger, splints, slings for the hoist, communication aids, etc. If your child is receiving oxygen please inform staff so we can arrange for an adequate supply to be available.


-  **Toiletries** – Disposable nappies, soap, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, etc.

-  Clearly **labelled** personal items and clothing.

-  Spending money for optional outings eg. ice creams, special treats.


-  **School work** – If required please arrange for your child's teacher to provide school work which can be supervised by our play therapist.

-  **Emergency Contact Information** – If parents/guardians are planning to be out of town during your child's visit, please leave a phone number where you can be reached in case of an emergency. It is also recommended that you leave the name and phone number of a friend or family member (who lives nearby if possible).

-  **Extras** – Favourite toy, DVDs, tapes, etc. Please ensure all are clearly labelled as Bear Cottage will not take responsibility for lost items.

Only PG or G movies and games will be shown in the public areas at Bear Cottage. M movies and games may be watched in children's bedrooms with consent from parents.

-  **Beach towels** – For use in the spa and at the beach.

-  **A Photo** – For identification purposes please bring along a recent photo of your child. This is kept with their notes and placed next to their name in the office during their stay. Photos need to be updated once a year.



## Siblings and young friends

Siblings are the responsibility of parents and must be supervised by parents at all times.

If you would like a babysitter on occasion, please speak with the nursing staff or volunteer manager in advance.

As part of Bear Cottage's fire safety requirements, please sign in and out when leaving or returning to Bear Cottage. The folder is located on the shelf near the fish tank.

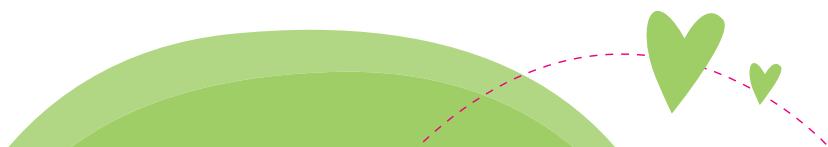
## Support for families

The social and emotional consequences of supporting a child who is ill can put families under a great deal of pressure. This pressure can affect all members of the family.

Bear Cottage recognises the stress a family may feel and the potential need to talk to someone during your stay at Bear Cottage. Therefore, as a part of the support philosophy and environment of Bear Cottage, a social worker is available to meet with you on a confidential and ongoing basis about any issues you or your children may be experiencing.

Access to spiritual care is also part of the philosophy of Bear Cottage and we liaise with many of the religious communities in the local area.

If you would like to meet with either our social worker or a spiritual care provider during your stay at Bear Cottage, please let a member of the nursing staff know and we will arrange a suitable time.





## Sharing a home-like environment



We make every effort to create an environment that is 'home-like'. However, unlike a home we have a number of families who reside here at any given time, along with staff and volunteers working at the cottage. It is important that everyone assumes the responsibility for creating an environment of sharing, respect and collaboration.

We ask that all children be settled quietly by 8.30pm. The main play area closes at 8pm. Children are welcome to quietly watch TV or DVDs after this time at the discretion of parents and staff. If using the downstairs games room please remember to turn off equipment when you leave. Remote controllers should be put away and not left on the floor.

Common areas should be kept clean and tidy. For example, put toys back in the appropriate place, return used dishes and cups to the kitchen and put away arts and crafts supplies etc. This is very much appreciated. Thank you for your co-operation and understanding.

## When family and friends come to visit

We welcome your visitors to Bear Cottage. All visitors are required to identify themselves by ringing the buzzer at the front gate.

Please use discretion regarding the number of visitors and the times at which people come and go. If you wish to have large groups visiting, please inform staff prior to making arrangements.

We recognise your visitors may wish to have a look around Bear Cottage, however, please consider the privacy of other guests and consult with staff members before touring visitors.

Tea and coffee are available for your use in the tea room at the end of the corridor.

**We regret we cannot provide meals or overnight accommodation for your extended family or friends on regular respite stays.**

**Please respect the privacy and belongings of others in the house.**

# Meals

The kitchen is staffed 9am – 6pm.

Meals are provided for children and family members staying at Bear Cottage. We make every effort to prepare the required amount of food for each meal, therefore we ask that you indicate to the nursing staff by 9.30am each morning if you:

- 🐾 Won't be here for a meal.
- 🐾 Have any specific dietary requirements (religious requirements, allergies, vegetarian, etc.).

## Mealtimes in the dining room:

- 🐾 Breakfast is prepared by staff and served to the children (patients) 7am-9.30am. Family members are welcome to fix their own breakfast from the selection provided on the side table in the dining room.
- 🐾 Lunch is prepared by the kitchen staff and served 12.30pm to 1.30pm.
- 🐾 Dinner is prepared by the kitchen staff and served 5.30pm to 6pm.
- 🐾 Snacks and an assortment of beverages (juice etc.) are available in the fridge in the dining room. Tea/coffee is available in the tea room at the end of the corridor.
- 🐾 The ice cream freezer near the kitchen is available for guests.

- 🐾 Please supervise your child's access to the dining area.
- 🐾 Please stack used dishes, glassware and cutlery on the trolley near the kitchen.
- 🐾 Please avoid taking food to rooms within the house. To prevent spills, children are especially encouraged to eat and drink in the dining room.
- 🐾 Hot beverages should be consumed in the tea room to prevent any accidents.
- 🐾 Please do not run on the floor in the dining/kitchen areas as it gets slippery.
- 🐾 Please remember that no animals or ride-on toys are permitted in the dining/kitchen areas.
- 🐾 Any requests for particular food items will be considered, please feel free to ask the chef!
- 🐾 The fridge in the tea room can be used for families' own food and drink. Please label/date all items and remove or discard before leaving.
- 🐾 All families are encouraged to eat their meals in the dining room.



# Housekeeping

Our housekeeping staff work seven days a week. Your assistance in keeping the house tidy is greatly appreciated. Cleaning supplies needed during your stay may be obtained from the housekeeping staff. In the event of spills or accidents throughout the house, please let us know immediately so we can minimise the damage.

If you were wondering about...

## Laundry

The laundry of unaccompanied children is taken care of by Bear Cottage staff.

Due to increased occupancy, water restrictions and budgetary constraints, the use of the Bear Cottage laundry should be kept to a minimum and used for essential washing only. Clothes lines are located beneath the quiet room. Please use the lines rather than the dryers in warm weather.

## Extra Linen

Extra towels and bedding are located in the linen cupboards on the first floor. Please ask for assistance but be mindful of the need to keep laundry to a minimum.

## Check-in to family suites

We clean your suite prior to your arrival. It is your responsibility to keep it clean and tidy during your stay. Linen cleaning and changing are the family's responsibility. (Please only use the beds required so that we can avoid excess laundry). Please also ensure that all rubbish is placed in the bins at the bottom of the driveway. Food should not be left out.

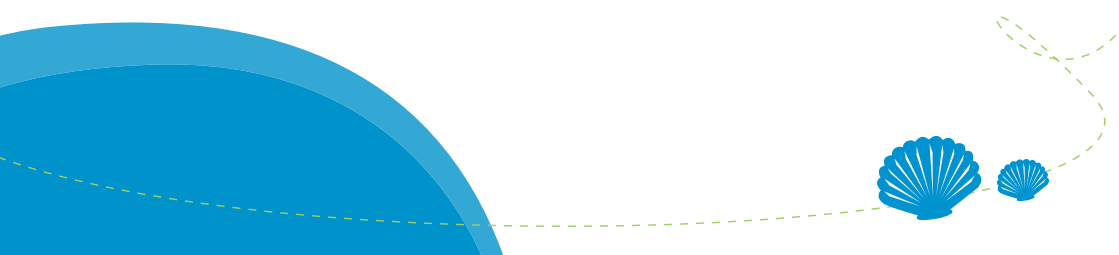
**Check-in time is 2pm-4pm**

## Check-out of family suites

Please ensure all your personal belongings are safely packed away and your family suite keys are returned to the nursing staff.

**Check-out time is 10am-11am**

Changes in check-in or check-out times must be approved by the Nursing Unit Manager prior to your admission.



# Hospice safety and fire regulations

In the event of fire or other emergency, families should stay in their rooms and await instructions from nursing staff or the fire brigade. If you find a fire or detect smoke, please evacuate the area and alert Bear Cottage staff.





Please do not use the lift if there is a fire alert.

Responsible consumption of alcohol is permitted by adult guests only. Please show respect for other guests. Disrespectful or offensive behaviour as a result of excessive alcohol consumption will not be tolerated. Staff have a responsibility to intervene and will do so, particularly if safety is compromised.

Bear Cottage is a smoke-free zone in accordance with Department of Health Guidelines. Smoking is not permitted on the verandas or inside the house. The far garden at the rear of the building is the designated area for smoking. Please dispose of your cigarette butts in the appropriate place.

For safety reasons, we ask that you please notify the nursing staff if your child uses a nebuliser.

## Returning home

-  Check-out is 10am-11am.
-  Please return family suite keys to the nursing staff.
-  Ensure all personal clothing, toiletries, equipment, supplies and medications are safely packed away.
-  Please consider booking future visits with the Nursing Unit Manager during your current stay.





## Don't forget...

- 🐾 Completed medication chart and all medications
- 🐾 Completed updated medical forms
- 🐾 Personal toiletries
- 🐾 All equipment your child requires at home
- 🐾 Sufficient supplies of formula and any feeding requirements
- 🐾 All clothes and personal items labelled
- 🐾 Check-in time is 2-4pm
- 🐾 Check-out time is 10-11am

**Bear Cottage**

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**bearcottage.chw.edu.au**



The Sydney **children's** Hospitals Network  
care, advocacy, research, education